

## Protect Your Vehicle

Vehicles can be stolen by experienced thieves for parts or by inexperienced thieves to take for a joy ride. Below are some easy tips to enhance your vehicles safety.



**Park inside** — Whenever possible, park in your garage and not in your driveway or the street.

**Lock it** — Always keep your vehicle doors locked, even while you are driving.

**Light it up** — If you must park outdoors during evening hours, park under a street or parking lot light.

**Shut it off** — Never leave your car running unattended.

**Don't advertise** — Remove all valuables that are attractive to a thief.

**Protect your information** — Don't leave bills or other documents with personal information in your vehicle.

**Identify it** — Have your vehicle identification number (VIN) etched on your car windows as a means of deterring theft. Additionally, stolen cars are more easily traced when VIN numbers are available.

## Theft Statistics

According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI),

- A motor vehicle is stolen in the U.S. every 26.4 seconds. In 2005, the odds of a vehicle being stolen were 1 in 207. The odds are highest in urban areas.
- Auto theft is an estimated \$7.5 billion business and continues to grow.
- A burglary occurs somewhere in the U.S. every 15.4 seconds.

Identity theft is one of the fastest growing crimes in the world. (Better Business Bureau)

More than 30 million victims of identity theft have been reported in the past five years. (Federal Trade Commission and Better Business Bureau)

For more crime prevention tips, visit [www.autoclubgroup.com/mnia/about\\_aaa](http://www.autoclubgroup.com/mnia/about_aaa)

For auto, home and life insurance information, visit [www.aaa.com](http://www.aaa.com)



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# Theft

Safety Tips for  
Your Auto, Home  
and Identity

## Home Safety When Traveling

If you are planning a vacation, it is important to take precautions that will help protect your home. An unoccupied house is more attractive to a burglar.

- Stop your mail delivery or have someone you trust pick it up daily. Don't let newspapers pile up making the appearance that nobody is home.
- Arrange to have someone shovel the snow or mow the lawn. If possible, have a neighbor park in your driveway from time to time.
- Use automatic timers on lights and radios. This will give the appearance that someone is home.
- Make sure all the windows and doors are locked before you leave.
- Do not make your travel plans widely known. Tell only those you trust.



## Identity Theft Prevention

It is extremely important to take steps now to avoid identity theft. Once your information is stolen, it can take months, if not years to resolve the resulting problems.

**Buy a paper shredder** — Shred all documents that have any of your personal information, especially unused credit card applications. A mailbox thief can fill them out and redirect the return address to start using your credit.

**Drop it off** — Do not place outgoing mail in your mailbox to be picked up. Take it to a post office drop box.

**Monitor your credit** — Check your credit reports at least once a year to monitor unauthorized activity.

**Protect your social security number** — Never give it out unless absolutely necessary.

**Don't respond** — Never respond to unsolicited e-mails that ask for personal information like bank account details.

**Hold on to it** — Never leave your purse or wallet unattended, even just for a minute. Don't leave your purse or wallet in your car, even when it's locked.

**Fewer is better** — Limit the number of credit cards you own and cancel any inactive accounts.

## Burglary Prevention

There are several easy, yet important steps you can take to help prevent burglary.



- Use deadbolt locks on all exterior doors. The lock should have at least a one inch throw. It is equally important that you install a heavy duty strike plate on all door frames.
- Make sure exterior doors and windows are locked and keep your garage door closed at all times, even when you are home.
- Use auxiliary locks on windows and sliding glass doors or have them pinned. You can also place metal screws in the upper track of the sliding glass door to prevent them from being lifted out.
- Be aware of what is happening in your neighborhood. If you see suspicious behavior, be sure to report it to the police.
- Never leave written messages outside your home. It's a sign that the home is unoccupied.
- Don't hide keys anywhere outside.